



# NEWS RELEASE

HOWARD COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF POLICE  
OFFICE OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS

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## **Police to kick off National Night Out Aug. 5 at Harper's Choice Village Center**

Police officers and members of the Howard County community are joining forces Aug. 5 for National Night Out, an evening of events intended to generate participation and support for local crime prevention activities.

Howard County events will kick off at 6 p.m. at Harper's Choice Village Center. Festivities will be held in the common area and the parking lot adjacent to Ruth Keeton Way.

"National Night Out is an annual demonstration of the department's strong partnership with the community," said Police Chief Gary Gardner. "Residents play an important role in fighting crime and keeping our communities safe."

In preparing for National Night Out, the police department has worked to heighten awareness and strengthen community spirit by helping residents organize more than 20 neighborhood block parties throughout the county.

Major Merritt Bender of the Howard County Police Department will be joined at the Harper's Choice Village Center kick off by County Executive Ken Ulman, Howard County Council Vice Chair Courtney Watson, Councilpersons Greg Fox and Jen Terrasa, Senator Allan Kittleman, Howard County Fire and Rescue Services Chief William Goddard, Howard County Sheriff James Fitzgerald, Maryland State Police Lieutenant Shane Bolger and other officials. The event, which is being hosted by Harper's Choice Community Association, will include the volunteer mounted patrol, command post, McGruff the Crime Dog, live music, refreshments, and other activities. A blood drive will also be held inside Kahler Hall from 4 to 8 p.m. (schedule an appointment at [www.redcrossblood.org](http://www.redcrossblood.org) or 1-800-RED-CROSS).

Police resources, including patrol officers, K9s, a SWAT vehicle, volunteer auxiliary officers and more, will visit neighborhood parties throughout the county.

Police are asking citizens to turn on outside lights and spend at least one hour in front of their homes – on their porches, balconies, front steps or lawns – to send a message to criminals that communities are banding together to fight crime. For more information about National Night Out, including a list of party locations, visit the Howard County Police Department's website at [www.hcpd.org](http://www.hcpd.org).

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